

THE TRANSPORTATION LINK



Vol. 7 No. 4

April 2000



Luz Araoz Hopewell
Director of the
Office of Small and
Disadvantaged
Business Utilization

Buckle Up America It's Good for Business

This newsletter highlights such an important topic for me - safety. The Department of Transportation's (DOT) strategic plan identifies safety as our North Star. It is so important for all of us to undertake safety measures to reduce motor vehicle fatalities and injuries.

Seat belts are proven to save lives. Please join our effort to *Buckle Up America!* The life you save could be that of a co-worker, a family member or your own. Implement a traffic safety program including mandatory seat belt policies.

Recently, Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater inaugurated the new Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. This new DOT operating administration will provide the necessary leadership to improve motor carrier safety. We will keep you updated on the new initiatives they undertake.

The annual report on the Department of Transportation (DOT) Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) Program was just released. I was so proud to see that the program had such a successful year. Congratulations to all of you who participated.

Lastly, I hope you will join me in celebrating National Transportation Week from May 14 - 20. All of us have a lot to be proud of concerning the work we do in the transportation community. As we celebrate National Transportation Week, let us all encourage the youth of America to explore the many exciting career opportunities in transportation.

Each year, businesses large and small pay the price associated with a national epidemic - and we don't mean the flu. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of workplace death and injury. Nationally, motor vehicle crashes kill 41 thousand people and injure 3.2 million more each year. Society spends 150 billion each and every year - and the cost to employers is over 50 billion.

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) wants to help employers address this problem. Motor vehicle crashes, whether they occur on the job or off, affect the workplace, and small businesses tend to feel the impact more than most. For example, the loss or incapacitation of a key employee can have a significant impact on a small business. There frequently is not anyone to back-up that employee's critical role in the company.

The single most effective strategy we know to reduce the effects of motor vehicle crashes is to increase seat belt use. Seat belts are proven to save lives and reduce serious injuries. That is why DOT has initiated the *Buckle Up America* campaign. This program is designed to galvanize the entire country into a unified effort to save lives and prevent injuries by increasing seat belt and child safety seat use.

1997 statistics indicate that on-the-job crashes cost employers on average \$22,000 in lost productivity and higher medical and insurance costs per incident, while each crash with injuries had an average price tag of \$110,000.

Off the job crashes involving employees and their families affect the workplace too. Employees miss time to provide care for an injured family member or to deal with a damaged car. They become distracted, spend more time on the phone, and they spend time talking with fellow employees about it.

The cost of a traffic safety program is minimal compared to the limitless savings in both human and financial terms.

Managed health care has helped to contain escalating medical costs in recent years. However, for injury-related medical costs, prevention is the best solution to control costs over the long term. Traffic crashes cause incalculable human suffering as well as imposing enormous resultant financial losses to American businesses, small and large. By implementing a simple highway safety program, an employer can



OSDBU

Office of Small
and Disadvantaged
Business Utilization

wants to hear from you!! Call us toll-free at 1 800 532-1169 with questions or comments about this newsletter or our web site. The Transportation Link's content may be reprinted without permission.

greatly reduce the risks faced by employees and their families, while protecting the company bottom line.

Failure to "buckle up" contributes to more fatalities than any other single traffic-safety related behavior. Despite terrible traffic problems, including road rage and aggressive driving, increasing seat belt use has been shown to be the single most effective thing that can be done to save lives and reduce injuries on American roads.



We don't consider road rage a traffic problem - it really is something entirely different although it does occur on the roads. We do consider aggressive driving one, however.

Making the effort to promote highway safety — especially promoting safety belt use — has a public relations benefit for businesses as well. A traffic safety program shows employees that there is concern for their health and well being, and it demonstrates to the community that the company is a good corporate citizen.

A seat belt policy requiring on the job seat belt use is good business. Enforcing it is important. Let employees know why you are doing this. Educate employees about traffic safety—especially seat belt use. Include this information in new employee orientation and employee training. Remind employees periodically. Protecting employees from motor vehicle crash injury is a profitable investment of time and resources.

There are several good sources of information on traffic safety programs.

The Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS) is a non-profit organization dedicated to reducing traffic deaths and injuries within our nation's workforce, thereby helping companies reduce the cost of doing business. To accomplish this, NETS provides employers access to the tools they need

to create well-developed policies, effective workplace traffic safety programs and compelling community activities.

NETS for example offers a simple booklet, *NETS: Set Up a Simple Highway Program and Save ...Lives and Money*, which shows six easy steps for building a highway safety program in the workplace, small or large. The booklet contains real-life examples of successful safety programs, sample messages, activities and worksheets for starting a program, program evaluation forms, and a list of resources to help a business start up, run and fine-tune a basic traffic safety program.

You can learn more about NETS by phone at (202) 452-6005, fax at (202) 223-7012, or visit their web site at www.trafficssafety.org.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is the U.S. DOT operating administration that is responsible for reducing deaths, injuries and economic losses resulting from motor vehicle crashes. This is accomplished by setting and enforcing safety performance standards for motor vehicles and motor ve-



hicle equipment, and through grants to state and local governments to enable them to conduct effective local highway safety programs.

You can learn more about NHTSA by visiting their web site at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov>. NHTSA also has a toll-free Auto Safety Hotline at 1-888-DASH-2-DOT (1-888-327-4236).



Safe Communities is a ONE DOT initiative of the Department's Safety Council intended to energize and mobilize communities across America to help us reduce transportation-related injuries and fatalities of our friends,



neighbors and loved ones. There are nearly 800 communities participating in this program.

You can learn more about DOT's 'Safe Communities' program at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/safecommunities/default.html>

Safety is the primary strategic goal of the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the Buckle Up America program is one of the major safety initiatives that supports this

goal. DOT encourages all businesses to implement a traffic safety program including on-the-job seat belt policies.

At a recent traffic safety conference, U.S. Transportation Secretary Slater charged us to mount an all-out effort to meet the national goal set by President Clinton to reach 85% seat belt usage by the end of year 2000. It is important for all of us within the transportation community to come together to reduce transportation-related deaths and injuries.

You can learn more about the Presidential Initiative for Increasing Seat Belt Use Nationwide on the NHTSA web site at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/airbags/presbelt>.

African Americans and Hispanics at Risk

Despite statistics that clearly show seat belt use reduces deaths and limits severity of injuries in motor vehicle crashes, there are two communities that show lower usage rates or a misuse of seat belts. Seat belt use among African Americans is more than 4 percentage points lower than the national average. Likewise, use of seat belts among Hispanics is also significantly lower than the population as a whole.

A recent study found that, although black and Hispanic male teenagers travel fewer vehicle miles than their white counterparts, they are nearly twice as likely to die in a motor vehicle crash. The picture is especially grim for young black males. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for blacks through the age of 14 and are the second leading cause of death for blacks between 15 and 24. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for Hispanics through the age of 24, and the second-leading cause of death for those aged 25-44. They are the third leading cause of death for Hispanics of all ages — surpassed only by heart disease and cancer.

Worst of all, children involved in car crashes with adults are similarly less likely to be wearing seat belts, or other appropriate restraints, and die, or are severely injured, needlessly. Observations have shown that if a driver is wearing a seat belt, 86 percent of the time young children are restrained; if the driver is not wearing a belt, young children are protected by belts or restraints only 24 percent of the time.

As described in the lead article of this newsletter, the costs to the economy of these needless deaths and injuries are enormous. The costs to our minority communities however, are even greater. It is imperative that we reach out to these communities and encourage the use of seatbelts.

A good place to start is within the small, women-owned, and disadvantaged business community. Mandatory on-the-job traffic safety programs can help teach the importance of seat belts. The need to increase the use of seat belts within minority communities, and especially among African Americans and Hispanics, presents a profound social challenge for all of us.



New DBE Questions and Answers

On February 17, 2000, thirteen more questions and answers pertaining to the Department of Transportation (DOT) Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program were posted on the DOT Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) web site at <http://osdbuweb.dot.gov/business/dbe/dbeqna.html>



The General Counsel of DOT has reviewed these questions and answers and approved them as consistent with the language and intent of 49 CFR Part 26. These questions and answers therefore represent the institutional

position of the DOT.

Further clarification on a variety of topics including bidders' list information, prompt payment, size standards for architecture and engineering firms, personal net worth, and more is provided in these new questions and answers.

The DBE questions and answers are listed by subject matter in the order that the topic appears in the new final rule. These thirteen new questions and answers are indicated with a posting date of February 17, 2000.

Also included is the requirement that, "Each federal agency, in contracts, subcontracts, and grants entered into after the date of this order, shall seek to encourage contractors, subcontractors, and grantees to adopt and enforce on-the-job seat belt policies and programs for their employees when operating company-owned, rented, or personally owned vehicles."

Is your business meeting its obligation to adopt and enforce on-the-job seat belt policies and programs for your employees?

Did You Know?

Did you know that the President passed an Executive Order on April 16, 1997 to *Increase Seat Belt Use in the United States*.

Included in that order is the requirement that, "Each federal employee occupying any seating position of a motor vehicle on official business, whose seat is equipped with a seat belt, shall have the seat belt properly fastened at all times when the vehicle is in motion."



For more information visit: <http://www.pub.whitehouse.gov/uri-res/I2R?url:pdi://oma.eop.gov.us/1997/4/16/3.text.2>

FY '99 DOT SBIR Program a Success

In FY '99 the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) Program awarded \$6.3 million in fifteen different states to small, women-owned, and disadvantaged businesses, thus, almost doubling the required statutory amount for spending.



In addressing such high-priority topics in the 1999 Solicitation as safety and security, infrastructure revitalization, and environmental issues, the SBIR Program was created to stimulate technological innovation, utilize small businesses to

meet Federal research and development needs, encourage participation by small, women owned and disadvantaged businesses, in technological innovation, and increase private sector commercialization of innovations derived from federal R&D.

Within the Department of Transportation (DOT), eight operating administrations participate in the SBIR Program: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Maritime Administration (MARAD), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA), and the United States Coast Guard (USCG).

On an annual basis, each of these (DOT) operating administrations develops research topics for the DOT SBIR Program Solicitation that reflect their own priority transportation R&D initiatives.

The DOT Strategic Plan includes a goal to expand opportunities and promote economic growth for all businesses, especially by encouraging and assisting

small, women-owned, and disadvantaged businesses to participate in DOT and DOT-assisted contracts and grants. The DOT SBIR Program is an integral part of DOT's implementation of this goal. DOT, through its operating administrations, identifies top priority R&D requirements, guided by the President's National Transportation Policy, which need innovative solutions. Each participating operating administrations' R&D requirements and all company eligibility information and proposal instructions are reflected in the DOT SBIR Solicitation and is available for downloading from the SBIR website: www.volpe.dot.gov/sbir.



New Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)

On March 8, 2000 U.S. Transportation Secretary Rodney E. Slater marked a historic moment in American transportation safety by formally inaugurating the new Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). Secretary Slater called on the newest agency of the U.S. Department of Transportation to provide the leadership, direction and action necessary to continue to improve motor carrier safety, save lives and guide the nation to reduce by 50 percent truck- and bus-related fatalities by 2010.

Information on additional steps to im-

prove motor carrier safety included making improvements to the commercial driver's license program to more effectively identify problem drivers, taking remedial action and getting high-risk drivers off the road, ensuring the safety fitness of newly-formed motor carrier companies, levying strong sanctions on foreign carriers who operate illegally in the United States, denying entry to carriers who are not properly registered and imposing stiff penalties on violators – including fines and, where warranted, shutdowns.

In addition, new FMCSA funding under the Motor Carrier Safety Improvement Act will provide resources to help states conduct more inspections of vehicles, drivers and carriers. Also funded will be a major study of causes of crashes as well as a new system for collecting crash data.

The FMCSA's web site can be viewed at <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov>. Included is

background information on this new operating administration, information on safety programs, rules and regulations, facts and figures, and contact information.



Meetings Management, Inc. Service, Safety and Success

April's Success Story features Meetings Management, Incorporated and the President, Mary Magnini. Ms. Magnini was the recipient of the DOT Minority Enterprise Development (MEDWeek) Award for her work with the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA).

"Meetings Management, Inc. has served as the Contractor for NHTSA's "all-hands" meeting, the National Lifesavers Conferences, and the Safe Communities Town Hall meeting and workshops. She handles all phases of conference planning, logistics and management.

"Her work has been exemplary," was the praise that NHTSA gave Ms. Magnini. "Her expertise and skill in dealing with hotels, partners, participants and speakers was instrumental in the success of these national efforts. Ms. Magnini's extraordinary teamwork, dedication and commitment in making these conferences a resounding success are a true reflection of her services to NHTSA."



Ms. Magnini's business evolved from a previous job she had in NW Washington. When she stopped working to take a year off to stay at home with her newborn son, her previous employer offered her meetings and conventions to work on from home. Eventually, she obtained more clients. While she continues to work from home, her business has grown exponentially since 1989, with revenues five times the initial year's gross.



She credits her success on "being blessed with great clients and the teamwork she shares with her employees Nicole Scott-Howe and Terry Bittenbender". Magnini believes the critical element that sets her company apart is communication, and plenty of it. The three of them work closely together, sharing ideas and different approaches to suggest to their clients. Most importantly, "we have a lot of communication with the client and never forget that the *client* is the decision-maker".

In this service-oriented business, Meetings Management, Inc. stays ahead by recognizing the importance of client interaction, even during the "off-times" when not working directly for them. Educational advances, improved technology, and knowing the suppliers have all helped keep the Meetings Management team focused on improvements in meeting and convention planning. In this business, "we do it all: meeting planning, site investigations, research, promotion and on-site management" Often her staff may include 3-4 additional employees that are recruited as the need arises.

Magnini incorporated her company, but does not plan to expand outside of her home in the near future. "With current

technology, we are able to transfer information and communicate with one another from our home offices". Her goal for expansion includes "making it possible for other parents who want to work from home to do so".

Magnini credits her father for setting such a good example for her. "My father had a wonderful work ethic. Regardless of what job he did, he was dedicated, loyal, and did his job well. And his family always came first".

Ms. Magnini's dedication and commitment have proliferated into several contracts with the DOT. NHTSA is one of their largest clients. Meetings Management, Inc. usually does 3-4 meetings for NHTSA per year. She speaks very highly of the people that she's worked with there. "The people we work with at NHTSA are very hardworking, staying late at night and starting very early in the morning. All our direct contacts on projects are very accessible and organized."

Other clients include Lifesavers Conference, National Environmental Education and Training Foundation (NEETF), the Children's Environmental Health Network and Alliance to End Childhood Lead Poisoning.



For more information, call 703-922-7944 or email: [magnini @ bellatlantic.net](mailto:magnini@bellatlantic.net). You can view their website at <http://www.meetingsmgmt.com>

National Transportation Week

National Transportation Week will be celebrated from May 14 – 20, 2000. This week provides an opportunity for the transportation community to join together for greater awareness about the importance of transportation.

Making youth aware of transportation-related careers is also an important focus of National Transportation Week.

The National Transportation Week web site can be viewed at <http://www.ntweek.org/>

It includes a listing of National Transportation Week activities, a history of National Transportation Week, school outreach materials commemorating the event, and much more.

In 1999 President Clinton's proclaimed National Transportation Week, "In recognition of the on-going contributions of our nation's transportation system, and in honor of the devoted professionals who work to sustain its tradition of excellence..."

"In recognition of the on-going contributions of our nation's transportation system, and in honor of the devoted professionals who work to sustain its tradition of excellence..."



CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR April/May 2000

DATE	EVENT	CONTACT
May 1-4	ITS 2000 Annual Meeting of the ITS America	Katrina Mayo (202) 484-4549 kmayo@itsa.org http://www.itsa.org/its2000/registration.nsf
May 15-16	Florida Black Business Investment Board Annual Investment Days Conference Tallahassee, FL	Barbara Lettman (850) 487-4850
May 21-27	SBA National Small Business Week Celebration Washington, DC	Susan Walthal (202) 205-608
May 24-25	FAA West Coast 2000 Small Business Conference Oklahoma City, OK	Tom Needham or Liz Hood (800) 878-2940 x 237 or 227 tom@fbcdb.com or liz@fbcdb.com
June 12-14	33rd Annual Joint Industry/ SBA Procurement Conference/ Expo/ Awards Washington, DC	(202) 401-1624 http://www.sba.gov/gc/expo.htm

<http://osdbuweb.dot.gov>

**US Department of Transportation
Office of the Secretary of Transportation**

Base Technologies, Inc.
1749 Old Meadow Road
Suite 500
McLean, VA 22102

Address Correction Requested